

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

SECRET STATE 225445

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE BASE NEGOTIATIONS: SECRETARY'S
MEETING WITH ROMULO

REF: MANILA 13609

1. AS A RESULT OF CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION HERE REGARDING
THE STATE OF OUR BASE NEGOTIATIONS, INCLUDING PARTICULARLY
RECENT PHILIPPINE MANEUVERING, WE CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT
MARCOS MAY NOW WISH TO POSTPONE SERIOUS NEGOTIATION UNTIL
NEXT YEAR. HE HAD SPECIFICALLY INFORMED THE DEPUTY
SECRETARY IN AUGUST THAT OUR REPLY TO THE AIDE MEMOIRE
CONCERNING THE APPLICABILITY OF THE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY
NEED NOT BE IN WRITING. HE HAS OBVIOUSLY CHANGED HIS MIND
AND WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT HE MAY FEEL THAT HE CAN
AFFORD TO WAIT US OUT OR THAT HE KNOWS A WRITTEN REPLY
WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR US AND HAS CHOSEN THIS NEW
DEMAND AS MEANS OF EFFECTIVELY POSTPONING PROGRESS IN THE
NEGOTIATIONS.

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2. IF MARCOS REMAINS ADAMANT, THERE APPEARS LITTLE CHANCE

OF MOVING THE NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD UNLESS WE AGREE TO GIVE
HIM A DETAILED WRITTEN REPLY TO THE AIDE MEMOIRE. WE ALSO
REALIZE THAT EVEN IF WE SHOULD DO SO, THE SUBSTANCE OF THE

REPLY MIGHT NOT BE SATISFACTORY TO HIM, WHICH COULD ALSO
LEAD HIM TO STALL THE NEGOTIATIONS. IN ANY CASE, THE
ISSUES OF MDT APPLICABILITY AND THE FINANCIAL QUID TO BE
OFFERED TO THE GOP ARE SO BASIC AND FUNDAMENTAL AS TO
REQUIRE CONSIDERATION BY THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL.
WE PROPOSE TO INITIATE SUCH CONSIDERATION BUT IN VIEW OF
THE COMPLEXITY OF THE ISSUES AND BECAUSE OF OTHER URGENT
DEMANDS ON MY TIME IT APPEARS VERY DOUBTFUL THAT SUCH
CONSIDERATION COULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE NEXT FEW
WEEKS.

3. ACCORDINGLY, I PLAN TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF MDT
APPLICABILITY AND THE MARCOS AIDE MEMOIRE IN ONLY VERY
GENERAL TERMS WITH ROMULO. I CONTINUE TO REMAIN WILLING
TO MEET WITH ROMULO BUT IT NOW APPEARS THAT A MEETING ON
SEPTEMBER 22 WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE. IN VIEW OF
ROMULO'S EXPECTED PRESENCE AT THE UNGA UNTIL DECEMBER,
IT APPEARS THAT A LATER DATE COULD BE EASILY ARRANGED,
IF NECESSARY.

WE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH
YOU REGARDING PLANNING FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS. IF THE
FILIPINOS ARE SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN MOVING THE NEGOTIA-
TIONS FORWARD AT THIS TIME, WE ARE PREPARED TO CARRY ON,
BUT THE WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE, INCLUDING THE NEGOTIATING
RECORD, APPEARS TO US TO INDICATE THAT THEY ARE NOW
MORE INCLINED TO WAIT THAN PROCEED.

5. FOR THE TIME BEING, SUGGEST YOU TELL ROMULO THAT
BECAUSE OF MY IMPENDING TRIP TO AFRICA THE SEPTEMBER 22
DATE MAY HAVE TO BE DEFERRED. AS SOON AS I CAN MAKE
FIRMER PLANS, I WILL SUGGEST ANOTHER DATE. I WILL BE
PREPARED TO DISCUSS IN GENERAL TERMS OUR MUTUAL CONCERNs
ABOUT SUBJECTS RAISED IN AIDE MEMOIRE, AND APPLICABILITY
OF MDT. AS FOR YOUR OWN PLANS TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON
DURING THE TALKS, WE CAN DISCUSS THESE SEPARATELY.

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